

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 10821 212053Z
ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4831

S E C R E T BOGOTA 10821

NODIS

DEPT FOR UNDER SECRETARY HABIB FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PBOR, GT, UK, BH, CO
SUBJECT: BELIZE NEGOTIATIONS

REFERENCE STATE 277166

1. I MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO THIS MORNING AND CONVEYED THE POINTS IN PARA 3 REFTEL.
I HAD EARLIER BEEN IN TOUCH WITH BRITISH CHARGE, WHO WILL BE MAKING HIS OWN DEMARCHE ON THIS SUBJECT TOMORROW.
2. LIEVANO SAID THAT GOC HAD IN EFFECT ALREADY TAKEN THE POSITION IN FAVOR OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT THAT WE WANTED, AND HAD DONE SO PUBLICLY. HE CITED FACT THAT GOC HAD JUST ABSTAINED ON TWO UNGA RESOLUTIONS THAT GOC FELT WERE EXTREMIST AND IN EXPLANATION OF VOTE HAD ADVOCATED FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS.
(FYI: BRITISH CHARGE TOLD ME THAT UK HAD THOUGHT IT HAD FIRM COMMITMENT FROM GOC FOR A FAVORABLE VOTE ON ONE OF THESE RESOLUTIONS.)

3. LIEVANO ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE BELIZE PROBLEM WITH ROWLANDS OF UK FOREIGN OFFICE.
LIEVANO SAID HE TOLD ROWLANDS THAT THE STRIP OF TERRITORY
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OFFERED GUATEMALA BY THE UK WAS TOO NARROW AND THE STRIP DEMANDED BY GUATEMALA SEEMED TOO WIDE. THEREFORE HE HAD NATURALLY ADVISED THE BRITISH TO FOCUS ON FINDING A COMPROMISE WIDTH. (COMMENT: IN OTHER WORDS, GOC HAS NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO THE CEDING OF TERRITORY TO GUATEMALA).

4. LIEVANO WOULD NOT HOWEVER COMMIT HIMSELF TO CONTACTING PRICE

ALONG THE LINES I OUTLINED TO HIM. THIS PROBABLY REFLECTS USUAL FOREIGN MINISTRY CAUTION IN SUCH MATTERS. HOWEVER, LIEVANO WENT ON TO TELL ME IN A POINTED MANNER THAT HE HAD HEARD VARIOUS RUMORS RECENTLY THAT SECRETARY VANCE WAS SEEKING TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL GROUP FOR THE CARIBBEAN WHICH WOULD INCLUDE VENEZUELA BUT EXPLICITLY EXCLUDE COLOMBIA. LIEVANO SAID HE HOPED THESE TRUMORS WERE FALSE BECAUSE SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO COLOMBIA'S IMPORTANT INTERESTS IN THE REGION AND WOULD ALSO OBSTRUCT THE KIND OF COLOMBIAN ROLE WE WERE SEEKING IN CONNECTION WITH THE BELIZE DISPUTE. I TOLD LIEVANO THAT THE EMBASSY HAD NO INFORMATION ABOUT SUCH A US PROPOSAL OR EFFORT AND THAT I PERSONALLY BELIEVED THESE RUMORS WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION. I ASSURED HIM HOWEVER THAT I WOULD COMMUNICATE HIS CONCERNS ON THIS POINT TO WASHINGTON IMMEDIATELY.

DREXER

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